

# Food for remote areas of Argentina & Chile



by Harriet & Neil Pike

# Food Planning

Food has played an essential part in the remote regions of our tours in South America. Our first trip to the high altitude Puna plateau in 2010 we didn't put much thought into provisions beforehand and ended up eating mush for weeks. This was incredibly bad for our (well, mostly Harriet's) morale and meant that by the end we were eager to return to civilization. Revisiting the area in 2013-14 we spent four spells of varying length on the Puna and used our previous experience to improve our diets when up there. The differing supplies for each of these stints (listed later) were dependent on local availability. Here are a few things we learnt about provisioning for long periods in the wilderness:

## **Salami, salami, salami (and maybe a bit of olive oil)**

Salami is packed with calories and is incredibly morale boosting. Take as much as you can carry! We really looked forward to our salami and mash meals as they broke up the pasta monotony. Olive oil is also very high in calories and much improves instant mash. Look out for sensational, and cheap, local olive oil in Fiambala, Argentina.



*Christmas lunch at El Condor basecamp.*

## **Angel hair pasta is gross!**

At altitude water boils at a lower temperature and as a result pasta takes much longer to cook. It also cooks more unevenly, going mushy on the outside while remaining hard in the centre. It's worth buying the more expensive brands of pasta, such as Lucchetti, as they don't go as mushy. Pasta shape is also important. You need something that

cooks fast to save fuel however angel hair, which cooks the fastest, ends up a squidgy and incredibly depressing mess. The shape known as *espirales* in Chile and *tirabuzon* in Argentina is our favourite.

## Dry veg in the sun

This is like witchcraft! Take 1kg of carrots, slice it finely, leave it in the hot Andean sun for a few hours (watch out for the afternoon winds) and you end up with a few hundred grams. Throw the dried veg in with your pasta water and watch it grow back.



*Drying veg. in San Pedro de Atacama, Chile*

## Re-use your pasta water

When water is scarce on the Puna, throwing away your pasta water doesn't make sense. We use ours to make pasta sauce with soup powder or if we are using a pre-made sauce then we save the water in a Nalgene bottle to make our porridge in the morning.

## Drybags make great air tight food containers

We like to store our oats, mash, bulghur, trail mix, and noodles in roll top dry bags or zip lock bags. The food takes up less room like this and you don't end up carrying lots of plastic rubbish around.

## Safe food depots

We learnt the hard way that foxes are quite skilled at locating and ripping into dry bags. If you leave food depots, local experts recommend you dig a hole, line it with rocks, place the food in a strong bag in the hole and then cover it with rocks.

# Our Menu

## Breakfast

100g of oats each (*usually made into porridge*) accompanied by 500ml coffee. We only took 80g each during our 17 day tour, but upped the ration when Neil complained he was being starved.

## Lunch

Either bread, wraps or pitta with chorizo, jam, peanut butter or Dulce de Leche.

Or 125g each bulghur with chorizo/salami, garlic, oregano and olive oil.

Or 1/2 pack Fruitigran biscuits each.

Or Hogareñas wholemeal crackers with Dulce de Leche, or cheese spread.

## Supper

Either pasta with soup powder which was laced with parmesan, garlic, oregano and merquen to taste. (*This is the lightest meal option, and so the one we most commonly ate. We came to dread it.*)

Or instant potato with chorizo/salami, garlic and olive oil.

Or instant noodles (*however, these are not on sale in Argentina, and Chilean instant noodles are worse than any we've ever tasted.*)

Or pasta with a pre-made sauce (*heavy, but we carry a couple as a treat*).

## Snacks

Chocolate (*we gave up on this after our first trip as it kept melting in the desert*).

Trail mix (*half peanuts, half raisins*).

Biscuits (*Don Satur bizcocho is best as they don't crush easily and are chocka with calories*).

## Water

We usually consumed 3.5-4 litres of water each per day. This was calculated as follows:

0.5l coffee

0.3l porridge

1.5-2l during day

0.5l tea

0.7l supper



# Food for 15 days (bought in Fiambalá, Arg.)



- |                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| 3kg Oats                      | 3 Sachets pre-made pasta sauce   |
| 2.5kg Bulghur                 | Black tea  |
| 4x 250g Fruitigran packs      | Apple, honey and cinnamon tea ( <i>AMAZEBALLS!</i> )                   |
| 6kg Pasta                     | 100g Instant coffee  |
| 8 Sachets instant soup powder | 3x Fruit powder drink  |
| 1kg Instant potato powder     | Garlic   |
| 600g Salami                   | 1 tin tuna   |
| 1kg Peanuts                   | 1 tin sweetcorn  |
| 1kg Raisins                   | 100g Mayonnaise  |
| 250ml Olive oil               | Herbs and chilli flakes  |
| 1.2kg Sugar                   | 1 Bottle cider ( <i>For the carabineros</i> )                          |
| 400g milk powder              | 7x 210g 9 de Oro biscuits ( <i>Similar but inferior to Don Satur</i> ) |

**TOTAL 21.5kg (48lbs)**

# Food for 17 days (bought in Calama, Chile)



2.7kg Oats	1.3kg Chocolate
1.6kg Tortilla wraps	1kg Peanuts
1.8kg Pitta bread	1kg Raisins
1kg Bread	1.2kg Sugar
1kg Peanut butter	250ml Olive oil
0.5kg Blackberry jam	20 Cedron teabags
1kg Bulghur	20 Earl Grey teabags
1kg Chorizo	0.1kg Instant coffee
4kg Pasta	0.1kg Parmesan cheese
1.6kg Instant noodles	0.4kg Milk powder
1kg Instant potato powder	1.5 bulbs garlic
4 Sachets tomato soup	Sun dried carrots
3 Sachets mushroom soup	Sun dried mushrooms
3 Sachets pre-made pasta sauce	Oregano

**TOTAL 28.5kg (63lbs)**

# Food for 18 days (bought in Tinogasta, Arg.)

3.5kg Oats  
1kg Bulghur  
6 x 250g Fruitigran packs  
0.54kg Spreadable cheese  
6 x 250g Crackers  
7kg Pasta  
3 Sachets pre-made pasta sauce  
11 Sachets soup powder  
1.5kg Instant potato powder  
0.9kg Salami  
1kg Peanuts  
1kg Raisins

7 x 210g 9 de Oro Biscuits  
0.5kg Walnuts (*Luxury snack*)  
1kg Sugar  
Black tea  
Mint tea  
100g Instant coffee  
400g Milk powder  
250ml Olive oil  
Garlic  
Herbs and chilli flakes  
Sun dried carrots  
Sun dried squash

**TOTAL 24.5kg (54lbs)**



*Camping by Pissis, Argentina.*

# About



## Neil & Harriet Pike

Neil and Harriet Pike have spent 3 years biking and hiking in the Andes. They're always drawn to the high routes in Peru and the Puna.

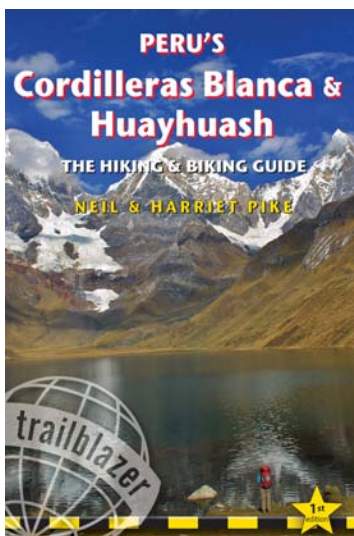
[www.pikesonbikes.com](http://www.pikesonbikes.com)



## Andes by Bike

Andes by Bike gives route information for dirt roads in the Andes. Most routes covered are ones we've ridden, but we're always looking for people to contribute their own remote routes, particularly if it was challenging finding information before setting out.

[www.andesbybike.com](http://www.andesbybike.com)



## Peru Guidebook

Harriet and Neil are the authors of *Peru's Cordilleras Blanca & Huayhuash: the Hiking & Biking Guide*, published by UK-based Trailblazer Guides in January 2015. These two neighbouring ranges boast some of the most accessible high mountains and spectacular scenery in the Andes; the guide gives detailed information and maps for 20 hikes (ranging from day walks to 14-day treks), 30 days of dirt and tarmac cycle touring as well as information about mountain-biking.

<http://trailblazer-guides.com>

## Please Share!

You are welcome to share this pdf and place it on your website for others to download. You may not copy the material, alter, sell, or use it for commercial purposes.

## A Bicycle Traveler Publication

Download more free cycle touring eBooks at

[www.bicycletraveler.nl](http://www.bicycletraveler.nl)

Copyright © 2015 Harriet & Neil Pike. All rights reserved.